1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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Yeppa ⟷ ***Wawa*** and ***Yukiyuko*** (sister ⟷ older and younger brother) 593

There are the same varieties of yeppa as of wawa and yukiyuko. 602 There is little difference in the behavior of a yukiyuko-yeppa and a wawa-yeppa relationship, except that if yukiyuko is an adolescent or child, he will not have an older brother's control over his sisters; but if he is an adult he has as much influence in directing their affairs as has his older brother. Yeppa calls any brother born before her "wawa" and any brother born after her "yukiyuko," exactly as a man would. With the above reservation, we can treat the yukiyuko-yeppa and the wawa-yeppa relationships as one, remembering of course the varying degree of closeness in the relationship between wawa and yukiyuko, and realizing its effect on the relationship we are now considering.

The sister and brother relationship is surrounded with taboos. If a brother speaks in the hearing of his sister, tribal or blood, he utters his words in a low voice, since she is not supposed to hear him. She speaks in the same manner before him. He never talks to her directly, nor she to him. He does not use obscenities in front of her as he would before most women (including his mother, daughter's daughter, and father's sister), nor will he allow anyone else to indulge in such language before her in his presence. They never sleep in the same hut or camp except as infants. At a very early age they are separated. Yeppa always helps her brothers if they are involved in a fight. She would not only ask assistance of her relatives but also give aid herself unless she felt a divided loyalty, in which case she would, with the help of other women, try to prevent a fight. [576] [513]

A brother is like a second father to a sister. If she is caught in adultery he gives her a beating and, if not stopped, tries to kill her. 593 684 When Daoper's wife ran off with Bengaliwe her near brothers gave her an unmerciful beating and might have killed her had not other relatives interfered. Even if a brother saw her own husband copulating with his sister, he would become angry and try to beat her. However, he is careful not to see them.

A yukiyuko always accompanies yeppa when she first goes to her husband's clan to live after their marriage. The brother is usually pre-adolescent, but sometimes he may be older. He is supposed to look out for his sister, seeing that she does not commit adultery, preventing other men from seducing her, and by his presence protecting her from ill treatment by her husband. 593 591

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765 of the man's personal basket. A piece of a spear that has been broken
628 off and left in the body of the victim is also used as a relic. When a man has been wounded he sometimes soaks pieces of paper bark in his blood and presents them to his relatives to be used as reminders of their duty to compensate him for his injury by helping him kill or wound a member of the offending man's clan. When a man obtains one of the relics, it is an almost absolute demand on him to kill a member of the slayer's group. This is particularly true if it is given to a young man. The older men usually give their relics to the younger males.

765 The spirit of the dead is supposed to go with the relic, and the relic
778 has magic power. It can be thrown into an intended victim's fire and cause him to go to sleep, or the possessor can blow his breath against
789 it and produce the same effect. It is often carried in the mouth during a battle to make an opponent tired and heavy-footed and to prevent him from dodging spears. Relics play a prominent part in all feuds.

682 Occasionally men are killed within the clan, but this is not a cause for war or retaliation by members of the clan or by near relatives from without the clan. A man may be such a notorious killer and cause so much trouble for his own clansmen that the entire group will kill him to stop further disturbances. At times men are slain by their own
688 clan for breaking ceremonial taboos, such as divulging secrets of the old men to the women or the uninitiated, and for viewing ceremonial objects before their initiation.

672 If a fight is on and a near relative is accidentally hit by a club or
576 spear, the person responsible hits himself on the head while saying he is sorry. Here, too, the underlying idea is to inflict an injury on the responsible person similar to the one the injured party suffered.

152 Military honor also contributes its share to the causes for war. A man
517 will brave the spears of a whole clan to demonstrate his fearlessness. The writer has seen two brothers defy fifteen men in a spear fight. The Murngin people are a brave and courageous group. Fear of death
[626] while in a fight is seldom seen. A man who shows an unwillingness to fight is called a woman and held in extreme contempt.

628 The fundamental principle underlying all the causes of Murngin
681 warfare is that of reciprocity: if a harm has been done to an individual or a group, it is felt by the injured people that they must repay the
181 ones who have harmed them by an injury that at least equals the one they have suffered. When the total cultural situation of Murngin life is
181 further examined, this negative reciprocation is found to fit into a

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If a woman secretly hunted for men's food at such a time, she would bring trouble on herself and relatives, and the species of game she killed would become scarce; when the men caught nothing they would say: 'Some woman must have eaten food here', and within a few hours every woman in the locality would be expected to produce an alibi. The life of her husband would be in jeopardy and sooner or later misfortune would overtake him. In offering condolence to an injured man, sympathizers will observe that, as there seems to be no apparent cause for his misfortune, his wives have probably violated this food law.

In bush camps men have a lot of time on their hands, and if a man strolls into a friend's camp he can be sure of a welcome and a remarkable display of polite consideration. If the host has been fishing, he will share the food with his visitor, totally ignoring women and children in his camp. He will remark that there are more fish if his visitor would care to stay and share them, or, if he shows signs of leaving, the largest and best will be pressed on him and the host may even give him a spear or spear-thrower as well. When I asked why such ostentatious gifts were made, I was assured that it was customary, and that the man sitting alone in his camp, except for his wives and children, is inordinately pleased when a friend visits him, and the gifts help to express his goodwill and friendliness.

On the other hand, aboriginal farewells are never prolonged. At the conclusion of a visit, or when leaving the home camp for an extended period, the men continue their discussions till the women, children, and dogs have started out. Men then terminate their visit by nonchalantly remarking: 'I'm finished; I'm going.' Nothing more is said on either side, and they leave.

'My word, Naratjin, you have a fine boy there. He has

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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576 your head, and his nose has a ridge like yours. I never noticed before just how much he resembles you, especially when he walks and swings his elbows. He's a splendid lad.'

Naratjin was amusing his small son beside his windbreak in the cool of the day, when Maulin, a man from another horde and moiety, spoke thus to him from the door of his hut. Nomads are extraordinarily susceptible to praise and readily respond to what we would call flattery. But [431] Naratjin was delighted at what he had heard and set about preparing the customary present of food for the [302] flatterer. He painted his son with coloured clay and decor- [301] ated him with armlets and corslet of string and bird feathers, and took him to visit Maulin. Looking up and seeing the child in all his glory, the flatterer expressed his pleasure before graciously accepting the present. At first I suspected the flatterer of 'singing for his supper', but this somewhat rare form of praise is genuine; it is spontaneously given in public, and Yulengor who may be sitting near by courteously lower their voices whilst the 'toast' is proposed.

576 224 [888] A carefully preserved etiquette governs the distribution of food. Choice parts of the kill, such as back legs and loins, go to the old men, before the rest is divided according to the age and importance of those present. Generally the meal proceeds peacefully, and each hunter receives his share with a studied indifference which is under careful control, for the greatest importance is attached to good food.

578 224 784 Quarrels can arise from the unfair distribution of food, as when Jaua brought in a kangaroo to share with his brothers and an old man of the Ngaimil horde, and the Ngaimil elder quickly muttered an incantation over it, declaring that he had thereby made it sacred to his Ngaimil totem. By his act, the old man made it possible for him to eat the meat but impossible for the youth who had killed the animal to

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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touch it, or for his brothers to do so either. The night was hideous with their quarrelling, and though the brothers attacked the old man with their spear-throwers, he loudly proclaimed the tabu and the youths dared not eat the meat.

Sexual intercourse is accepted as a natural function, not to be affected by proximity to the family circle or to other families camped a few feet away, nor yet by occasional unseemly interest from the young men's camp. Even in east Arnhem Land, where a strict morality is outwardly enforced, intercourse is little less than promiscuous, and it is not to be wondered at that most youths laughingly admit their *affairs d'amours*, and that women frequently make the initial advance—though secretly for fear of their husbands.

To prevent irregularities, married men enforce a number of prohibitions, and unmarried and unattached men are segregated in a camp by themselves at a reasonable distance from any family. A woman is not allowed to eat food presented to her husband by a youth, in case he should consider her to be under an obligation to him, and if a youth wishes to share his food with a married brother, he must not go to his camp but must call him over and give it to him.

In many relationships it is unlawful for a man and woman to greet each other, and when I have asked for a name, I have often been greeted by evasion or silence, simply because no one present was allowed to utter the name. Brothers and sisters may not look at each other when speaking, but talk with averted faces. A man converses freely with his wife, mother, daughter, granddaughter, and niece; but when speaking to other relatives he averts his face, and not being able to call them by name he draws their attention by an ejaculation or by saying: 'I wish to

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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speak to the mother of so-and-so.' He may also get round the prohibition by using relationship terms or addressing his remarks to a third person.

Nomads have no equivalents to our courtesy phrases 'please' and 'thank you' but make use of a highly developed form of praise. They couch their requests in courteous flattery. A Yulengor who is preserving some highly prized spear-heads may be reluctant to part with them, but if a man says to him, 'Ga, bokor-julni' ('Give to me, your face is smiling, pleasant and good'), he will almost certainly hand over the goods. Again, a man stretching out his hand to a relative for some rare food will probably say: 'Ga, kong-julni' ('Give to me, your hand is kind and generous').

Other forms of speech are used more often between closely related nomads, as when a child says to its mother: 'Ga, bokor-ngati' ('Give to me, your face is like my grandfather's'). Brothers, sisters and cousins say to each other: 'Ga, bokor-bapa' ('Give to me, your face is like your father's'). Sometimes they employ the idiom: 'Rhumbul durung unnera' ('Body and flesh like your father'), though more frequently this is addressed to a corpse in mourning ceremonies.

For years I was at a loss to know why groups of laughing Yulengor broke off their conversation when I happened to be passing, and turned to say: 'Poor fellow-tribal-father.' When I asked why they thought I was a 'poor fellow' they were momentarily nonplussed and I was still further embarrassed. Such a group would never laugh, even at a joke, if they saw an elderly or respected Yulengor passing. If they happen to be laughing or talking as an 'old' man approaches, they turn and say 'Kummajarrk', thereby conveying best wishes, goodwill, and sympathetic understanding, and implying that they think well of him and that their laughter is not at his expense. In similar circumstances,

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women would remark 'Kummajulni' ('Your chest is broad and your breasts well nourished'). 576 195

A man who accidentally injures another, perhaps by tripping or striking him with a spear or canoe paddle, abjectly apologizes by saying: 'Kummajarrk, ngara gorana.' He protests his goodwill, adding that he is ashamed or cast-down at his victim's discomfort, and except in the case of brothers and nearest relatives, he invariably gives a present as compensation. [431]